



Tips for New PLTW Programs

Beginning a new PLTW program is very rewarding for both teachers and students. It can also cause frustration and wasted effort and/or resources due to misinformation. Here are a few basic tips that we have gleaned from new teachers and new programs that we hope will help your program avoid the pitfalls.



Register your school district with PLTW National, sign your school district agreement, and then be sure to **individually** register each school that will implement PLTW. Once the schools are registered, then each teacher designated as a PLTW teacher will need to register. **NOTE:** Registering as a teacher does NOT register the teacher for summer training. That is a completely separate process. Notification of the opening of summer training registration will come on the listserves and on the website. Sign up early as classes sometimes fill fast!



Unless you have reasons to do otherwise or are rolling them out simultaneously, we suggest that you begin your program with Introduction to Engineering Design, followed by Principles of Engineering. The level of math required for POE is much higher than for IED—most students begin PLTW in the freshman year when they have not had enough math to ensure success in POE. We find it is much better to offer it sophomore year.



Begin immediately to form your Advisory Council. Base your decisions on whom to include on what they will be able to offer your program and whether they are a decision maker in their organization. Do not populate your council with ex-teachers and retired engineers; seek out industries that provide workforce to your local economy—they will be happy to work with you if it means future employees for them. You can also work with them to determine which elective course would be best to adopt for your particular area.



When ordering equipment for the classes you will offer, do not order everything the PLTW Purchasing Manual says you will need for the class. If Fischertechnics kits are on your list, **DO** order them early—they take a long time to get since they are coming from Germany. Everything else, unless you must use up grant money, can wait until **AFTER** your teacher has been to Summer Training Institute and has seen what the true needs for the classroom are. Even if the teacher is taking the late summer session, teaching the software will require enough time in the schedule to allow equipment to arrive. In addition, check with other schools in your area to see if you can share equipment since you won't use all of it all year long.



If you are far enough away that your teacher must drive any distance to the summer training, we highly recommend that they stay overnight rather than commuting. These classes are **INTENSE** and it is easy for a teacher to fall behind. Also, impromptu study groups often spring up, and in any case, much time is needed for evening study.



Be sure to join—and have your teachers and counselors join—the Ohio listserves; you can join at the website at www.pltwhoio.org. Teachers and counselors have separate listserves—sometimes the info applies only to them, but the state Department of Education and the state affiliate also send out information on them.



Use the websites, both www.pltwhoio.org and www.pltw.org to keep up with information and news. Ohio's implementation plan for the PLTW program differs slightly from the national plan, so be sure to check the local website for updates.



If you need a large quantity of promotional material, contact me at deb.lukjanovs@sinclair.edu – PLTW National only provides up to fifteen of each brochure, but we can get quantities if you give us some notice.